

The Balkan wars of 1912-1913 once more led Europe to the brink of the abyss. Though neither French nor German interests were directly involved, their respective allies were ready to fly at each other's throats, and the ten months -of conflict left a gnawing *malaise*. The German army, already slightly augmented in 1912 in consequence of the Morocco crisis, received in 1913 an increase of 170,000 men, the largest ever known ; while a capital levy of fifty millions was imposed to bring fortifications and artillery up to date. In introducing the Army Bill the Chancellor justified his demands by the displacement of power resulting from the Balkan wars, pointed to the growing menace of Pan-Slavism and French chauvinism, and spoke ominously of a conflict between the Teuton and the Slav. The Bill passed without opposition, for Germany was convinced that her safety could only be guaranteed by the strength of her right arm. Austria was weakened by racial dissension, Italy an uncertain ally, Turkey defeated, Roumania drifting towards St. Petersburg, while the enmity of France was unchanged, the hostility of Russia increasing, and the loyalty of Great Britain to her new friends beyond reproach. •

If Germany was aware of her peril, she was also arrogantly conscious of her strength. Russia, it was widely believed, was rotten to the core, France decadent, England occupied with sport. In the middle of the 'nineties Bebel described his fellow-countrymen as still drunk with victory. Public opinion had grown ever more restless and excitable, and loudly insisted on Germany having her pkce in the sun. The centenary of 1813 raised the national temperature, though the *Festspiel* of Gerhart Hauptmann disappointed the more flety patriots. <e The Kaiser is profoundly pacific," wrote the Belgian

Minister from Berlin on March 8, 1913, " but the spirit of the governing classes is very different." Though the Social Democrats emerged from the elections of 1912 the most powerful party in the Reichstag, the ferment among the middle and upper classes struck all observers. Otfried Nippold, returning after several years in the Far East, was shocked by the change, and in his *German Chauvinism*, published in 1913, courageously held the mirror up to his fellow-countrymen. Bernhardt's *Germany and the Next War* proclaimed, like Treitschke during the Bismarckian era, that war was part of the divine order. The Pan-German League, small in numbers but skilful in propaganda and insatiable in its demands, had been reinforced by the Deutscher Wehrverein, founded in 1912